



CITY OF LODI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Approve Letters to State Water Resources Control Board in Support of Mokelumne River Water Rights Applications

MEETING DATE: May 2, 2007

PREPARED BY: Public Works Director

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve letters to the State Water Resources Control Board in support of Mokelumne River water rights applications for North San Joaquin Water Conservation District (NSJWCD) and San Joaquin County.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The State Water Resources Control Board has recently taken a number of actions that are detrimental to long-term water supply and groundwater basin management. Specifically, they have denied NSJWCD's request to renew their Mokelumne River permit for 20,000 acre feet and have canceled the San Joaquin County (acting as the Mokelumne River Water and Power Authority) application for up to 544,000 acre feet for the Mokelumne River Regional Water Storage and Conjunctive Use Project (the MORE water project).

The NSJWCD water was only available in normal and wet years but was unreliable, leading many users in the District to switch to groundwater. Thus, the District has not utilized this full amount. The District has been making plans to utilize the water for groundwater recharge but is stymied by denial of their renewal application.

The MORE water project has recently been gaining momentum, after a slow start. The County, in cooperation with other water entities, including Lodi, has been working, with active State involvement, on an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan that incorporates the MORE project. This plan is required in order to obtain various State grants for the project and needs an Environmental Impact Report, which is underway.

Staff supports efforts to reverse these two decisions and, if approved, would draft letters for the Mayor's signature that would be coordinated with letters from other agencies.

FISCAL IMPACT: Not applicable.

FUNDING AVAILABLE: Not applicable.

Richard C. Prima, Jr.
Public Works Director

RCP/pmf

cc: Mel Lytle, San Joaquin County Water Resources Coordinator
Ed Steffani, Executive Director, North San Joaquin Water Conservation District

APPROVED: _____
Blair King, City Manager